

6th District Updates

Winter 2003

Fearey's First Edition

Special points of interest:

- Looking for a New City Manager
- Senior Services of Wichita
- Extended Special Assessment Financing
- Residency Requirements
- Check out what 's in Potpourri

Some of you may have noticed that there has not been a 6th District Update for the past few months. I apologize for not keeping you informed as often as I had hoped. It is not for a lack of wanting the citizens of District 6 to know what is going on. It is just that there has not been time to deal with all of the issues occurring at the city and to also get a newsletter out!

Exciting things are in store for the city as we move ahead in the recruitment of a new city manager. While Mr. Cherches has served the City of Wichita well for many years and has been instrumental in bringing many innovative and exciting projects and developments to the city, it is now time to look to the future. Change can be exciting and invigorating and can help lead the city on a path to other innovative and exciting projects.

While I look forward to the opportunity to help select and work with a new manager, I am also pleased with the Council's decision to retain Mr. Cherches consultant services for the next few months. With several department head positions open or soon to be open, and several mid-level management positions vacant, it is imperative that the city be able to maintain the continuity that Mr. Cherches can provide. Since his salary and benefits were already in the budget, as is Ms. Holdeman's salary, there will be no additional cost to the taxpayers.

I was also extremely pleased with the Council decision to have citizen focus groups conducted by Wichita State. The input from these groups will assist in the formulation of the profile for the job of city manager. The search firm will use this input along with input from personal interviews with council members and other community stakeholders to develop the profile that will be used to recruit candidates.

As the community moves through this process, I would encourage you to email me with any ideas and/or thoughts you may have regarding the selection process or the qualifications you would like the new manager to have. I look forward to hearing from you.



Looking for New City Manager

Sharon Fearey

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Residency Requirements for Boards/Commissions

In July the City Council voted to change the required residency for the city's technical boards – Plumbing, Electrical, Mechanical, and Code Appeals – to allow people who do not live with the City of Wichita to serve on these boards. The number of non-residents will be limited to no more than 25% (rounded) members (i.e. 2 for seven member Boards/Commissions and 4 for 15 member Boards/Commissions). The appointee must also be a holder of a Wichita certificate and a Wichita license. The 6th District Advisory Board had recommended voting against this change. The city has always been able to fill the board positions. And there was concern that this could lead, in the future, to lessening the residency requirements for other Boards/Commissions. I voted against the change in the residency requirements, but the majority of the council members approved it.

YOU'RE INVITED TO COFFEE (OR BREAKFAST) WITH SHARON

Hearing from you has always been important to me. I try to get phone calls returned, emails answered, attend neighborhood meetings, inform DAB members about Important projects, and keep my 6th District Update posted on my City of Wichita web site.

In 2004, however, I want to try adding one more way of keeping in touch with residents of the district. Starting on Saturday, January 24, 2004, I will be meeting with any of you who want to join me to discuss issues and answer questions pertinent to the 6th District.

Please join me for a cup of coffee or breakfast (Dutch treat)

**Saturday January 24, 2004
Morris Restaurant
(in the back meeting room)
1014 N. West Street
9:00 am to 10:00 am**

Hope to see you there



Senior Services of Wichita

I had the pleasure of touring Senior Services, Inc. at 200 South Walnut. They gave me permission to pass on information about their services to the Wichita community. Hopefully you will find it to be helpful information for either yourself, a neighbor, or a family member.

Senior Services, Inc. of Wichita began in the late 1960's when a group representing several urban churches came together to discuss the needs of older people living in the downtown core area. The first Meals-On-Wheels were delivered on January 13, 1969. The facility is the central location for the Meals-On-Wheels Kitchen, the Downtown Senior Center, and all other program staff except the three neighborhood Senior Centers located at Linwood, Northeast (east 21st Street) and Orchard Park.

Information/Assistance-Aging matches callers with the program or service that answers their needs. Current information about community services is kept on file so that callers receive updated referrals. Information about similar programs nationwide is available. In FY2002, 5,789 client contacts were made.

In-Home Respite Care Program provides relief to the primary care giver of a disabled elder and is intended to allow the caregiver needed time away from care giving. In FY2002, 108 individuals received 9,709 hours of service.

Meals on Wheels Program delivers a hot nourishing meal to the homebound person five days a week. Weekend meal delivery is made to those considered most frail and at risk of institutionalization. Volunteers who deliver the meals are a daily face-to-face contact for many people who are otherwise isolated. The program served a total of 254,167 meals to 1,833 homebound people in FY2002.

Neighborhood Connection connects volunteers with older neighbors who need help with light housekeeping, yard work, companionship and other neighborly assistance. During FY2002, 101 people were matched with 100 volunteers for a total of 3,765 hours of volunteer assistance.

RSVP (Retired and Senior Volunteer Program) matches volunteers 55 and above with meaningful community volunteer work in local nonprofit agencies. RSVP is a Corporation for National & Community Service program. 2,120- Retired Senior Volunteers gave 254,859 volunteer hours to 131 community nonprofit agencies in FY2002.

Roving Pantry takes orders over the telephone, shops for and delivers groceries to homebound people who pay for their groceries on delivery. In FY2002, 5,607 deliveries were made to 417 individuals.

Senior Centers offer rich opportunities for people 55 and above to gather for education, socialization, and health related and recreational activities. The four Senior Centers: **Downtown, Northeast, Linwood and Orchard Park**, served approximately 4,750 people in FY 2002.

Senior Employment Program offers employment referrals and other employment-related support services to older job seekers. The program is also useful to local employers looking for experienced, dependable workers for particular types of work. This is a joint program of Kansas Elks Training Center and Senior Services, Inc. In FY2002, the program had 238 job placements in the homes of private individuals and 21- placements with business in Sedgwick County. Referral Policy: Senior Services, Inc. of Wichita makes referrals to all appropriate services and programs in the Wichita area-either our own or those of other agencies. Referrals to our programs from any source are welcome.

Potpourri

The Twin Lakes rezoning case was approved by the City Council. The North Riverside Neighborhood Association was very involved in meeting with the developer's representatives to work out a mutually agreeable rezoning for the property. I would like to thank everyone for all of their hard work on this issue and for their willingness to communicate and compromise. Hopefully the new Starbucks is only the beginning of a great new future for Twin Lakes.

The City Council again voted against the recommendation of the Office of Central Inspection, the National Electrical Code, all six District Advisory Boards and the city's own electrical review board on the requirement for the installation of Ark Fault Circuit Interrupters in bedrooms in new construction. These interrupters are intended to provide protection from the effects of arc faults by recognizing characteristics unique to arcing and by functioning to de-energize the circuit when an arc fault is detected. Although the speakers at the Council meeting, including the Fire Chief, all urged adoption of the amended ordinance, the council voted down the recommendation 5-2 with Council Members Lambke and voting against the motion to not adopt the changes.

The southeast corner of 21st St. North and Arkansas will soon be home to a new car wash. At the urging of the District Advisory Board, the car wash has been designed to keep noise away from the residences to the south on Arkansas.

Central Riverside Park had a grand reopening sneak preview on November 29. Although there was still much to be finished, visitors got a good look at what they can expect when the official grand opening is held next spring. The tentative date is May 1. Plans are being formulated at it should be a fun time as Wichita's premier park is reopened for all Wichitans to again enjoy.

The far northwest part of District 6 is slated to have a sanitary sewer main installed. The area is roughly bounded by Meridian on the west, the Little Arkansas River on the east, 61st Street North and 37th Street North. The sewer main will connect to an existing line near 37th Street North and Arkansas Ave. and will tie in with future projects. So far two developers and one property owner have signed a petition for sewer service. A survey by City Staff indicated that other property owners might join the benefit district as the project becomes more definite. This proposal enables the two developments to be built without using alternative sewage systems that are a known source of pollution.

Public Works recently evaluated the roof of Park Villa in North Riverside Park and determined the roof to be in a seriously deteriorated condition. Water damage has occurred to rafters and soffits. To prevent further damage, the roof needed to be replaced with tiles to match the existing roof. City Council approved using Community Development Block Grant fund that can be made available from savings from completed projects to fund the roof replacement. Public Works will be coordinating the project with the Historic Preservation Planner to ensure that it is done to historic preservation standards.

Council has recently adopted two new Small Business Loan/Investment Programs. 1. The Micro Loan Program would address small businesses. The city will use \$50,000 for the Small Business Administration required Loan Loss Reserve for South Central Kansas Economic Development District's SBA program for loans in Wichita that meet the City's targeted goals. By using the \$50,000 in City funding, \$500,000 in SBA Micro Loan funds is leveraged bringing in \$10 in SBA loan funds for each \$1 in City funding. These loans would be for businesses with less than \$250,000 per year annual sales. 2. The Small Business Capital Funds would be marketed to disadvantaged small businesses. City funds of \$250,000 could be used to create a new, non-traditional capital business financing program for Wichita businesses that cannot qualify for conventional financing. The program would be operated by Wichita Technology Corporation in partnership with the Kansas Minority Business Development Council.

Extended Special Assessment Financing

The Wichita Area Builders Association (**WABA**) requested the City Council to consider extending the bond terms for special assessment debt from its current fifteen (15) years to twenty (20) years, matching a proposed change in the collection of special assessments from property owners. The goal of the WABA extension of the term is to lower monthly/annual special assessment payments for new residential subdivisions with unique and extraordinary development costs and as incentives for existing neighborhoods without standard municipal improvements (i.e. paving, water/sewers, drainage, etc.). At its September 9, 2003, the City Council approved the establishment of a task force comprised of WABA members, City staff members and Council members Martz, Fearey to review and recommend criteria and term of special assessment financing for prospective new developments on a case-by-case basis.

Some of the criteria recommended by the task force when considering extended special assessment financing are: (1) dewatering for sewer projects; (2) drainage and major on-site detention requirements; (3) extension of Wichita water or sewer mains farther than is typical to serve new developments; (4) enhanced road improvements; (5) collector streets; and (6) bridges.

The task force also recommended that applications for extended special assessment financing submitted by **existing** Wichita neighborhoods for paving, storm sewer installation and water/sewer installations be automatically approved. The task force believes that 20-year assessment period may serve as an incentive to neighborhoods without municipal utilities to petition for these services. This may mitigate existing problems with septic tanks, lagoons, unpaved streets, drainage issues and other related problems. In addition, such a financing incentive will reduce maintenance costs incurred by Public Works for road grading and maintenance of ditches in areas with unpaved streets.

Each and every application submitted for extended 20-year special assessment financing will be reviewed by a permanent committee to be appointed by the City Council. This committee will remain consistent throughout the New Year pilot project.

Tax Increment Financing (TIF) *The following is a reprint of an article from the Wichita Downtown Development Corporation Newsletter.*

With the recent Council approval of the Water Walk Development, the article is a timely addition to the 6th District Update to assist the public in understanding how this funding source works.

Tax Increment Financing (TIF) is a proposed funding source for the Water Walk project.

Unfortunately, some people do not understand this mechanism or how it works. The following is an overview of this developer-paid tool.

Tax increment financing works like this: The City and a Developer identify an area where physical conditions of blight exist or improvements are needed to conserve the physical quality of the area. The City then creates boundaries and determines the assessed values of property in the area. The assessed values are then frozen at their current level and owners continue paying property taxes. As investors construct new buildings in the TIF district, the property values in the area grow. This growth leads to an increase in property taxes that the City can separate and use to pay for the area's public infrastructure and site development costs. Once these costs are repaid, the TIF is eliminated and all property tax revenues go to the City, County and School District. In short, a TIF directs the new taxes paid by property owners to fund eligible costs and improvements that support a redevelopment project. This insures that the developers pay for items that may otherwise be the City or County's responsibility. As the TIF only captures new taxes generated by growth, it will not affect the current property tax revenues received by the City, the County or the School District.

In the case of the WaterWalk, the City is committed to fund about \$30 million; of which, about \$20 million would be funded by new taxes paid by the WaterWalk through the proposed TIF district. Because improvements are needed to attract this private investment and growth, a TIF captures the new funds paid by the developers and directs the money for things like the waterway, landscaping, road construction and utility relocation.

While responsibility to pay the costs rests ultimately with the City, the facts show that the property owners that benefit from public investments within a TIF district pay for many of the improvements by paying higher taxes. If the project does not happen, the tax base in the TIF area will not grow and property tax revenues will not increase. While TIF's can be complicated to explain, the districts are a common financing tool that shifts the cost of public infrastructure to developers that are benefiting from the improvements. This means that the developers, not the community at large, pay a larger share of the project costs. Given their successful track record, a TIF district offers a logical and sensible approach to help fund the Water Walk project.

Tax Increment Financing
(TIF)

Proposed funding source for
the Water Walk project

Murdock Bridge Improvements



The Murdock Bridge over the Little Arkansas River on the East side of Central Riverside Park has been approved for improvements. The DAB recommended approval of the project with an 11-0 vote. The council followed suit and approved the project unanimously. The proposed improvement consists of removal and replacement of the roadway deck and support girders. The sidewalk will be refurbished and new lighting will be installed. Construction is planned for 2004 after the River Festival is completed. It is unfortunate that the project couldn't be done at the same time that Riverside Park Improvements were being made, but Federal Funding did not become available until recently. This funding is saving the city \$100,000 and is allowing more structural work to be included. The bridge will be closed for approximately 7 months.

New Ordinance Makes It a Crime to Keep Your DOG on a Chain

Keeping a dog chained up has always been cruel and inhumane. Now, it's also illegal. If you break this law, you may be subject to penalties of up to \$500 fine and/or six months in jail. Here are details of Wichita City Ordinance 6.04:



- It is unlawful to keep a dog tethered in place for more than one hour at a time
- After a break of three hours, the dog may be tethered again for one hour, but for no more than a total of three hours per day
- The tether-whether it's a chain, leash, or rope-must be at least 10 feet long and weigh less than 1-8 of the animal's body weight
- The tether must be attached to a collar or harness in such a way to prevent injury
- The dog must be tethered to prevent strangulation, injury or entanglement

DON'T BE CRUEL-BE A GOOD OWNER-SHELTER YOUR DOG



Evergreen Neighborhood City Hall

2700 N. Woodland
Suite D
Wichita, Ks 67204
Phone: 316-303-8042
Fax: 316-303-8049

Customer Service Above and Beyond



OCTOBER 11, 2003

ON THIS COLD RAINY
MORNING, VOLUNTEERS WERE
OUT IN THE STREETS OF 21ST –
25TH, MARKET TO ARKANSAS.

THE NEIGHBORS WERE
ANXIOUSLY WAITING TO ASSIST WITH
DUMPING THEIR TRASH. IT HAD BEEN FIVE
YEARS SINCE THEIR LAST CLEAN-UP AND TRASH
WAS ACCUMALTING.

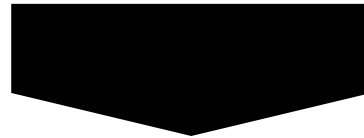
**DON'T LET IT BE FIVE YEARS BEFORE YOUR
NEXT NEIGHBORHOOD CLEAN-UP.**

**REMINDER:
CONTACT THE OFFICE OF CENTRAL
INSPECTION (268-4460) AND GET AN
APPLICATION FOR YOUR 2004 CLEAN-UP**

Senate Reauthorizes TEA 21

On November 12, 2003, The Transportation Equity Act (TEA) was reauthorized by the Senate Environment and Public Works Subcommittee for a period of six-years. The Act will provide a total of \$730 million dollars per year for funding a number of transportation enhancement and park programs. In addition to the funding opportunities, important protections are given to parks, wildlife and historic areas.

This may prove to be good news for the Parks Department who currently has plans in place for a master bike path. The reauthorization of this Act could provide an alternative funding source for the bike path and help lighten the load on Wichita taxpayer's wallets.



Support the Kansas Wildlife Exhibit in Riverside Park

*The following article was written by Roy Beckemeyer
for the Riverside Booster*



One of the Riverside/Midtown neighborhoods' very special attractions is the Kansas Wildlife Exhibit (KWE) in Central Riverside Park at 700 Nims. Located on a site that has housed a zoo of one sort or another since 1901, the KWE opened in 1988. The exhibit has a modern, naturalistic design that requires visitors to look carefully to see the inhabitants. It contains eight enclosures with over 25 different species of native Kansas mammals, reptiles and birds.

The KWE is a favorite spot for many area residents and park visitors. In addition, many of the animals kept at the KWE are used in environmental education programs conducted by the staff of the Great Plains Nature Center. Through these programs thousands of children and adults, who might otherwise never get the chance, have seen these Kansas animals up close.

As part of the renovation of Riverside Park, a KWE supporter's recognition area is being added to the exhibit. Bricks and stone pavers, engraved with the names of contributors, will be placed around the animal enclosures. You can support the upkeep of the exhibit, including the feeding and care of the animals, by purchasing a brick or paver. These would make great gifts for family and friends for the holiday, or memorials for loved ones. The available stones and contribution levels are:

- 8 by 4 inch red brick with 3 lines of 15 characters per line (including spaces and punctuation): \$100-\$199
- 8 by 4 inch gray stone with 3 lines of 15 characters: \$200-\$349
- 8 by 8 inch gray stone with 6 lines of 15 characters: \$350-\$549
- 16 by 16 inch gray stone with 12 lines of 15 characters: \$550 or more

You can send a check or money order (payable to The Greenway Alliance Kansas Wildlife Exhibit Fund) together with the inscription desired, to: Kansas Wildlife Exhibit, c/o The Great Plains Nature Center, 6232 E. 29th St. N., Wichita, KS 67220. The Greenway Alliance is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization and contributions are tax deductible.